

**SUMMARY OF THE
QUALITY SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 12, 2001**

The Quality Systems Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on September 12, 2001, at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). Dr. Fred Siegelman of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), Chairman, led the meeting. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. *The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the issues in the distributed agenda.*

INTRODUCTION

Dr. Siegelman called the meeting to order and reviewed the meeting agenda.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Microbiology – Ms. Marty Casstevens, Chairperson

Two Microbiology subcommittee issues were discussed for the NELAC-7I conference:

Culture Media – The Microbiology subcommittee drafted proposed wording for NELAC Standards. Ms. Casstevens will forward the proposed wording to all Quality Systems Committee members to review. Should time permit, the proposed language will be discussed at the September 17, 2001, Quality Systems committee meeting. If there is no time available to discuss proposed language and there are any really substantive issues, they should be forwarded to Dr. Siegelman by September 24, 2001. Dr. Siegelman will forward the proposed language to Ms. Jeanne Hankins if there are no further issues for posting on the NELAC website and for discussion at the NELAC-7I conference.

Free Chlorine – It is understood that if there is indication that a sample had not been checked or documented in the field, it will be recommended that a test for chlorine be done. This test is only applicable to the public water system compliance samples and not to the individual homeowner well waters. This understanding will be relayed to the Microbiology subcommittee in their meeting to be held later today, September 12, 2001. Microbiology will propose language for the next revision of the NELAC Standards. Whether to insert the language into the NELAC Standards Section 5.11.3.a.2 or in the Microbiology section was also discussed. It was decided that the Microbiology subcommittee would determine the placement of the proposed language into the NELAC Standards.

Dr. Siegelman suggested that any proposed language be written in such a way that it could fit into either the existing or reorganized version of the NELAC Standards. However, if there is only one version, the current plan is for Quality Systems to ask for adoption of the ISO 17025 draft with the understanding that if this draft is accepted, there will be no new requirements. Any new requirements will be provided as a separate document. Further discussion is necessary as to whether a residual chlorine check is required because there seems to be a different interpretation of the

NELAC Standards between the Accrediting Authorities.

Asbestos – Dr. George Kulasingam, Co-Chairperson – The report on this issue and draft of the proposed text will be postponed until the Quality Systems meeting on September 17, 2001. This issue will further be discussed and proposed language for the NELAC Standards drafted. Mr. Michael Beard is and will continue co-chairing the Asbestos subcommittee.

Performance-based Measurement Systems (PBMS) – Mr. Scott Siders, Chairperson, reported by Dr. Siegelman – A request for an extension from the October 1, 2001 deadline to deliver the PBMS document to Ms. Hankins has been requested. This time extension will allow this document to be reviewed at the Board of Directors meeting scheduled for October 11, 2001. Ms. Silky Labie will request time on the agenda for this review.

ISO 17025 – Dr. Fred Siegelman, Chairperson – A two-day ISO 17025 subcommittee meeting was held at Ft. Mead last week and a teleconference was also held September 11, 2001. Ms. Nicole Weymouth is the Technical Editor preparing the reorganized version of the NELAC Standards without any new requirements other than those that are in the NELAC standard and ISO 17025. Examples of some global wording substitutions include changing “international standard” to “standard,” “accrediting bodies” to “accrediting authorities,” “programme” to “program,” “testing and calibrations” to “environmental testing and calibration,” “testing and a calibration item” to “sample,” and now using the term “Quality Manager.”

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

NELAC-7I Conference

There was a discussion regarding who has responsibility for the NELAC-7I agenda preparation and distribution and as well as when this will occur. Dr. Siegelman will call Ms. Hankins to discuss the NELAC-7I questions regarding detailed agendas and deadlines.

COMMITTEE RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

New or Reconditioned Instruments – ONGOING – Comments from Mr. Clifford Glowacki will be forwarded to Mr. Bob Di Rienzo for further review and discussion.

One Standard Calibration for Method 6010B – ONGOING – There is need for a reference check if test samples result in a number at or beyond the calibration range. The deadline to submit comments to Mr. Hooper is Monday, September 17, 2001. Mr. Hooper will finalize the text for discussion at the Interim meeting

PBMS Subcommittee Request for Direction – ONGOING – The meeting scheduled for September 12, 2001, was canceled because of the terrorist activities. However, the subcommittee is trying to

schedule two additional teleconferences to discuss, add or change language. Currently, PBMS has prepared two versions as well as a table of comparison between the two versions. These documents will be distributed and posted on the NELAC website after review by the Quality Systems Committee for in-depth comments before NELAC-7I. There are some high-level issues that need to be discussed and it is requested PBMS be included on the agenda for the next Board of Directors meeting scheduled for October 11, 2001.

Culture Media – ONGOING – Ms. Casstevens has prepared and distribute proposed language to committee members for review and discussion.

Quality Control Data in Final Report – COMPLETED – Nothing further needed for the NELAC-7I Conference.

Editorial - COMPLETED – Nothing further required for NELAC-7I conference. The reference in section 5.1.b to 1.9.2 was changed to 1.8.2. It was noted that there is now a PDF version of the standard with minor editorial changes now posted on the NELAC website.

Continuing Instrument Calibration Verification (5.9.4.2.2) – COMPLETED – See Action Item #14 below.

Testing Microbiology Samples for Free Chlorine – ONGOING – Ms. Casstevens will distribute proposed text for review by the committee members.

Calibrating Salinity, Conductivity, Temperature Meter – COMPLETED – Nothing further required for NELAC-7I Conference.

Interpretation of 5.11.1 and 5.13 Language – COMPLETED – Dr. Siegelman will respond to Ms. Hankins as to the committee agreement that the standard does not require Container ID to be in the final report.

AIHA and Asbestos – COMPLETED – Dr. Siegelman resent the letter and email to Mr. Joe Slayton.

Blank Contamination – COMPLETED – A response prepared by Dr. Siegelman and Mr. Siders was sent to the lab. This stated that if there is a proposed change to the standard then the proposed change should be submitted in the preferred format and a copy also be sent to the lab's Accrediting Authority. Also Section D.1.1a could be interpreted to say that samples should be qualified in any case-corrective action.

Requirement for Continuing Calibration – COMPLETED. The intent of this Standard is that Continuing Calibration be done at the end of batch for analysis, including on the day when the initial calibration is performed. However, if further interpretation is required, it will be addressed as part of the PBMS draft. Dr. Siegelman will write the response to this action item and copy Ms. Hankins.

Interaction with Accrediting Authorities - The following procedure was discussed:

1. The Quality Systems Committee receives a request for interpretation.
2. The Quality Systems Committee will refer laboratories to their Accrediting Authorities if this is appropriate.
3. The Quality Systems Committee will respond or get input from the Accrediting Authorities.
4. The Quality Systems Committee will copy Jeanne Hankins (to inform the Accrediting Authorities) with any information or opinions given labs.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NELAC-7I CONFERENCE

The Quality Systems Committee will review the draft ISO 17025 on Monday, September 17, 2001.

Those members having comments to the ISO draft that are unable to attend the Quality Systems meeting scheduled for September 17, please submit comments to Dr. Siegelman by September 24, 2001. If there is no time before the October 1, 2001 deadlines to review the PBMS draft language, the committee will request that Ms. Hankins post the draft on the website to permit discussion at the NELAC 7i Conference.

The deadline for reservations at the Crystal Gateway Marriott for the NELAC-7I Conference is November 2, 2001.

The Accrediting Authority Assessor Training scheduled for December 3-4, 2001, will most likely be canceled. More information will follow.

The NELAC-7i Opening is at 1:00 p.m. on December 4, 2001. The Closing and the ELAB will be held December 7, 2001.

NELAC 8 Annual Conference is tentatively scheduled for the week of July 8, 2002 in Tampa, Florida. More information will follow.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Dr. Siegelman adjourned the meeting.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for September 17, 2001.

ATTACHMENT A

**ACTION ITEMS
QUALITY SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 12, 2001**

Item No.	Action	Date to be Completed
1	Ms. Casstevens will forward the proposed wording to all Quality Systems Committee members to review	ASAP
2	Members to forward any substantive issue NELAC Standards comments to Dr. Siegelman	09/24/01
3	Dr. Siegelman will forward the NELAC Standards proposed language to Ms. Jeanne Hankins	10/01/01
4	Dr. Siegelman will call Ms. Hankins to discuss the NELAC-7i questions regarding detailed agendas and deadlines	ASAP

PARTICIPANTS
QUALITY SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 12, 2001

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